

Oklahoma SCS/NRCS Retirees Newsletter

April 2023

The Oklahoma SCS/NRCS Retirees met at the Golden Corral Buffet Restaurant in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma on April 28, 2023. Twenty-nine people were in attendance. They were: **Laurie Bogle, Tony Boeckman, Steve Chessmore, Larry Coppock, Fred Fortney, Harry Fritzler, Ron Goedecke, Chuck Grimes, Sandra and Terry Hough, Terrell Howard, Shelley and David Hungerford, Nick Lambeth, David McKay, Kevin Norton, Phil Perryman, John Pewthers and guest Eyvonne Hart, Fredia and Stan Rice, Greg Ritzman, Dan Runnels, J. Kirk Schreiner, Brenda and Michael Sheik, Lillie and Ed Stinchcomb, and Darol Wilson.**

President **Steve Chessmore** welcomed everyone to the meeting. **Stan Rice** provided the blessing for the meal and everyone enjoyed the buffet meal.

Everyone in attendance introduced themselves and their spouse/guest. First time attendee, **Greg Ritzman**, retired in December 2022 from the Vinita Field Office where he served as the Conservation Technician. His career took him through the Perry Watershed Survey, Miami FO & Vinita FO.

Secretary-Treasurer **Sandra Hough** read the list of those retiring since October 2022: **Greg Ritzman**, SCT, Vinita, 12/3/2022; **Mary Stoll Podoll**, State Conservationist, North Dakota, 12/31/2022, formerly DC at Frederick FO, went to North Dakota in 2003; **Kevin Shotts**, SCT, Chickasha FO, Team 12, 12/31/2022; **Jennifer Mosteller**, SCT, Pauls Valley, Team 14, 20 years service, 1/27/2023.

Sandra also read the list of known retirees who have passed since October 2022: **Raymond Alvin Lee**, 87, retired watershed construction inspector, retired in 2007, passed in Shawnee 8/26/2022; **Bonnie Perryman**, wife of **Fred Perryman** & mother of **Phil Perryman**, 10/31/2022; **Otho Lamar**, 87, retired DC, Duncan FO, 11/22/2022; **Gayle Fortney**, 88, wife of **Fred Fortney**, 11/22/2022; **Allen Messenger**, 63, DC for Team 1, Guymon, 11/30/2022 (in service); **Seth McCool**, 40, Range Conservationist, Lawton, 12/12/2022, went to work 2017 (in service); **Mark Habiger**, ASTC (FO), came to Oklahoma in 2000, left for Texas 2008 & retired in 2018, passed in late 2022; **Loretta Bourlier**, wife of retiree **Bob Bourlier**, 1/19/2023, Pawhuska; **Carol Diane Miller**, 74, widow of **Glen Miller** (passed in 2017), 3/6/2023; **Sammie Williams**, retired watershed survey team, Chickasha, 38 years service, retired in late 1990's, 3/27/2023; **Johnny Davis**, retired SCT, Chandler, 36 years service, 4/4/2023; **Bob Gaines**, 83, retired CET, McAlester AO, 4/15/23; **Roberta Elder**, 88, wife of **John Lee Elder**, retired watershed construction inspector, 4/17/2023; **Bobby Smith**, 86, retired DC, Medford, 4/20/2023, 31 years service.

Sandra also read the minutes of the October 2022 meeting and provided the treasurer's report. There were 82 notices mailed and two returned for incorrect address.

Randy Freeland was unable to attend the meeting as he is attending the NARFE State Meeting but had received information about retirees he wanted to be shared. **Sandra Hough** told the group about **Lester Brockman** who has attended several of the meetings. He was involved in a vehicle accident a year ago and had neck & back surgery and sons do not think he needs to be driving in OKC anymore. He wants to remain on mailing list. **John Lee Elder**, retired watershed inspector from Clinton is currently staying with his eldest daughter in Owasso, OK. **Johnny** is 92 years old. His wife **Roberta** recently passed on April 17, 2023.

Everyone was reminded the \$10 dues are annual dues whether paid in the spring or fall. The dues are used to cover expenses of the meetings including cost of printing meeting notices, postage and name tags. Retirees should email Randy Freeland randy.freeland@suddenlink.net to request an email meeting notice in lieu of a mailed meeting notice and to report a change in mailing address or email address.

Stan Rice provided the group an update of the activities of the Oklahoma Conservation Historical Society (OCHS) in its sixth year of operation. **Stan Rice** and **Harry Fritzler** (newest board member) serve on the nine-person board. **Tom Lucas** helped secure a \$5000 grant to create a museum and traveling photo exhibit highlighting the importance of conservation in Oklahoma. Reminded the group that if they are involved in any local activities related to conservation, there are six museum quality pop-up banners for loan. The banners can be used to promote the oral history collection, the conservation photo collection, the National Land and Range Judging Contest, Oklahoma's watershed program (two banners) and the Oklahoma Conservation Historical Society. **Ben Pollard** and **Larry Caldwell** recently attended the History Symposium at the History Center. Larry presented the program about the oral history project and photo digitization project. Currently there are 50 oral histories and 12,000 photos on line. Through an agreement with NRCS, four additional oral histories will be funded with work starting in 2023. There are another 8,000 photos being processed with a goal of having 20,000 photos in the collection by June 2023. Many of the photos have unknown names. Should you be able to identify any of the faces, with the picture open, click on the url for that picture and identify the person(s) in the photo. It will go to those at the Historical Society and additions can be made. Harry Fritzler, Stan Rice, Larry Caldwell or Ben Pollard can also be contacted with the information. Oral histories which were gathered can be accessed at: <https://library.okstate.edu/digital/>. Several conservationists who have provided oral histories are now deceased emphasizing the need to obtain as many as possible before it is too late. The photos may be accessed at: <http://gateway.okhistory.org/explore/collections/OKCHS>. The website can be accessed at: <https://www.oklahomaconservationhistory.org>.

Stan has 2023 Membership forms for those interested in becoming members or renewing their memberships. Memberships for 2023 with the Oklahoma Conservation Historical Society are being accepted in the following categories: General (\$25), Family (\$40), Organization (\$50), Sustaining (\$100), Corporate: Bronze-\$500 Silver-\$750 Gold-\$1000. Checks should be made payable to: OCHS, and mailed to Larry Caldwell at 3312 Cypress Mill Avenue, Stillwater, OK 74074. The SCS/NRCS Retiree group became a member in October 2018 and continues to renew the membership each year.

Forms were passed around for retirees to provide their retirement activities (i.e., volunteer work, travel, part-time work, activities, etc.) This information is used for the National and Oklahoma Retired SCS/NRCS Employees Association Newsletters. Here are a few received at this meeting:

Greg Ritzman is still working with producers, cutting wood and studying God's word. **Sandra** and **Terry Hough** stay busy assisting their church food pantry providing groceries for those in need. They have 2 married daughter, 3 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren, all within about 3 hours from them. One grandson is completing his freshman year at Southwest Oklahoma State University. In August, they will celebrate 55 years of marriage. This fall they will have enjoyed 20 years of retired life. **Ed** and **Lillie Stinchcomb** are both retired and have homes in both Hollis (their home town) and Mustang. The reason for two homes is that they have 11 grandkids (some at both locations). In February, they took a 10 day trip of a lifetime to Israel. They have been quoted as saying "We will never read the Bible the same way again". Both are active in First Baptist Church in Hollis. In addition to managing family farms, Ed is an Associate Board Member for the Harmon County Conservation District.

A few comments were received in response to the email announcing the April 28, 2023, meeting: **Carolyn Webb** said: Thanks Randy. I appreciate you keeping us in contact with fellow coworkers and friends. To me, our coworkers are like family. I keep in touch with **Larry Wright** and **Steve Elsner**. And I miss being in touch with **Bartolina**, and **Les Conner**. Was so happy of the information on the **Connors**. I was so lucky to have had about 5 different ACs. We can't make the luncheon today. I'm still planning on making the 5K race here in Bristow in a couple of weeks. We have so many first place trophies in our age division from the last 20 years. Think about it, who else 73 and 74 are going to enter! FYI **Charles Noyes** is still living here in Bristow. His son lives with him. His wife and daughter have both passed away. **Bob** and I went to **Lester Liggon's** retirement party.

Ron Hilliard wrote: Randy, thanks for the email but I will not be able to make the meeting. **Edith** and I will be in our 14th day, of our Panama Canal Cruise that begins in Galveston, Texas on April 14 and concludes in San Francisco on April 30. Edith and I will be celebrating our 56th wedding anniversary on the cruise. Prior to this trip Edith and I were volunteering at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo from February 10-March 19, living in our RV during that period of time. Our volunteering kicked off with the Ranching and Wildlife Committee hosting the 3 day 10th annual Young Guns FFA and 4H trap and skeet event. This year we had 570 participants from all over the State of Texas. The following week we worked the Archery Competition attended by about 350 FFA and 4H participants. Then we transitioned to the World Championship BBQ contest for the week of February 19-25 where our team Texas Cowtown Cookers placed 10 in ribs out of over 200+ teams entered. With all those preliminary events out of the way, Edith and I moved over to the NRG event center to work on the Commercial Exhibits Committee of the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo. Here we assisted the 440 exhibitors/vendors organize, move in, and set up then during the 19 days of the rodeo worked with all the vendors to ensure smooth operations. Then at the end assisting with organizing tear down and move out. So... for the last three weeks we have been resting cleaning up the RV and preparing for the upcoming Cruise. We did have one incident after returning absence. Our rural water line ruptured and 44000 plus gallons of water flooded the pasture above the house, so after a very muddy repair we had water again. Other than those few items I celebrated 10 years of retirement in January. Tell everyone Hello and Welcome to come visit us in Texas.

Editor's Note: Several of us that drink coffee on Friday mornings at What-a-burger in Stillwater wondered about **Odos Henson**. Just recently ran into him and **Diane** at a bank here in Stillwater. They both looked good and said they were just enjoying life. If you want to contact them, they still live on the farm at 1615 S. Vassar Rd. Orlando, OK 73073.

Please feel free to send something similar to those above that can be used in the October 2023 Newsletter. Do it now before you forget! Send it to: randy.freeland@suddenlink.net

Many retirees have expressed their appreciation for the information presented on the website www.joepad.com. When they are not able to attend the meetings, the website provides minutes of meetings, pictures, list of attendees, etc. **Joe Freeland**, retired Construction Engineer, has been very gracious to keep the website updated after each meeting.

An election of officers for the Oklahoma SCS-NRCS Retired Employees was held. Officers serve a period of two years and will assume their duties in October 2023. **Kirk Schreiner** has volunteered to serve as President and **Ed Stinchcomb** has volunteered to serve as Vice-President. **Sandra Hough** is willing to continue to serve as Secretary-Treasurer. Nominations and volunteers of others were open to the group. Since there were no other volunteers, Kirk Schreiner will serve as President; Ed Stinchcomb will serve as Vice-President; and Sandra Hough will continue to serve as Secretary-Treasurer. **Steve Chessmore** and **Harry Fritzler**

both served as President/Vice President since being elected in April 2019. The meeting held in October 2019 was the last meeting until resuming in April 2022. No meetings were held in 2020 or 2021. Thank you, Harry and Steve, for your service during the last 3 years.

The next meeting is scheduled for **Friday, October 27, 2023**, at the Golden Corral on MacArthur Boulevard in Oklahoma City. The Golden Corral opens at 10:30 AM so there is extra time for visiting before the meeting starts at 11:30 AM.

There was no other business to bring before the group and the meeting was adjourned.